

June 21, 2010

Water Quality Protection Division



Mississippi Canyon 252 Oil Spill, Gulf of Mexico Region 6 Update

Subject: **Water Quality Division Update # 36**
 Mississippi Canyon 252 Oil Spill, Gulf of Mexico

Date: June 21, 2010

Reporting Period: June 18, 2010 1300 – June 21, 2010 1300

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Forecast

- The nearshore oil forecast created by NOAA on 6/20/10 at 2100 CDT for 6/21/10 at 1200 CDT (Figure 1) indicates that the main part of the oil slick will be east of Louisiana. Winds are forecast to be 10 knots or less through Wednesday out of the east to southeast. The oil slick is projected to move slowly eastward. Shoreline impacts are may occur between Dauphin Island, Al and Panama City, Fl.

Monitoring and Assessment

- Continuing to coordinate with the REOC Environmental Unit on the review of incoming water and sediment quality monitoring data, including results from water samples analyzed for dispersants and sediment toxicity testing results.
- Attending regular meetings and calls with Region 4, HQ, & REOC.
- 1 staff member currently located in 8th floor REOC throughout the day.

Drinking Water

- Drinking water intakes, public drinking water wells, and domestic wells have not been impacted by the oil sheen and are not projected to be impacted.
- EPA Region 6 is providing the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals (LDHH) daily situation report as well as data summaries as they become available.
- EPA Region 6 continues to coordinate closely with the LDHH on all drinking water issues.

Data Management – Mapping Efforts

- Updated the Shoreline Coastal Assessment Team (SCAT) and spill trajectory data.

NPDES

- Continue to participate in discussions regarding options for addressing the moratorium on drilling as it impacts NPDES Permit GMG290000.
- Participating in discussions on options for disposal/treatment/permitting of oil skimming decant water.
- NPDES Permits and TMDL Branch continues to be available to provide technical assistance as needed.

Coastal Programs

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Louisiana Large-Scale Coastal Barrier Plan:

- Dredging and stockpiling material has begun, with two dredges working, one east and one west of the Mississippi River. No lab results are available yet for the material dredged from the River. Shaw Group's current best case estimate for constructing all six segments is 145 days and 18-20 million cubic yards of material but several assumptions have been questioned by the Corps and other agencies.
- Plans developed by an interagency working group (including EPA) were approved at the end of 2009 to address a shortage of capacity for the placement of dredged material from Corps of Engineers operations to maintain navigation depths in the upper reaches of Houston Ship Channel and the Bayport Ship Channel, Texas. Construction of new marsh and upland habitat placement areas was scheduled to begin this week, but the project is now on hold, pending a final decision by the Corps to reassign these dredges to the Louisiana sand berm project. Other Corps navigation maintenance dredging projects in Texas and western Louisiana may be similarly impacted.

Corps Emergency Authorizations for Coastal Protection Features:

- The Corps has not forwarded for comment any new emergency authorization requests for incremental work to install booms, sand bags, tiger dams, concrete blocks, rocks, dredges, or similar structures.

OW Ecological Impact Analyses:

- The Ecosystems Protection Branch Chief participated on an interagency call on June 18, 2010, regarding an internal draft CEQ outline for a long-term Gulf ecological restoration plan. Continuing discussions are expected to provide further details on the plan for meshing this effort with the ongoing CEQ Roadmap for Gulf Coast Ecosystem Sustainability and Resiliency.
- Ongoing internal discussions regarding regulatory and technical aspects of various oil skimming and disposal scenarios.
- Discussions continue regarding the marsh protection and marsh remediation alternatives and techniques.
- Ongoing coordination, through OW, with the Association of National Estuary Programs and NEP Directors regarding baseline characterization data, habitat and restoration priorities, and a request to OWOW to provide a bridge between the NRDA process and the NEPs.

Corps Navigation Maintenance Dredging:

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- Maintenance of the Houston Ship Channel for commercial navigation may be effected by the reassignment of dredges to the LA sand berm project (see above).
- The Corps is employing oil detection kits on the dredges, a technique coordinated with EPA and Corps research facilities during the 2008 Mississippi River oil spill. In addition, new ship decontamination sites have been established in the lower Mississippi River and Southwest Pass which may be within the area of influence of the EPA-designated ocean disposal site.
- Discussions are underway regarding marsh remediation efforts and initial agency coordination is occurring regarding monitoring the long-term landscape-scale coastal habitat impacts.

Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act (CWPPRA)

- There have been no changes to the list of CWPPRA projects in the vicinity of oil impacted areas since 6/18/10 (Figure 2).

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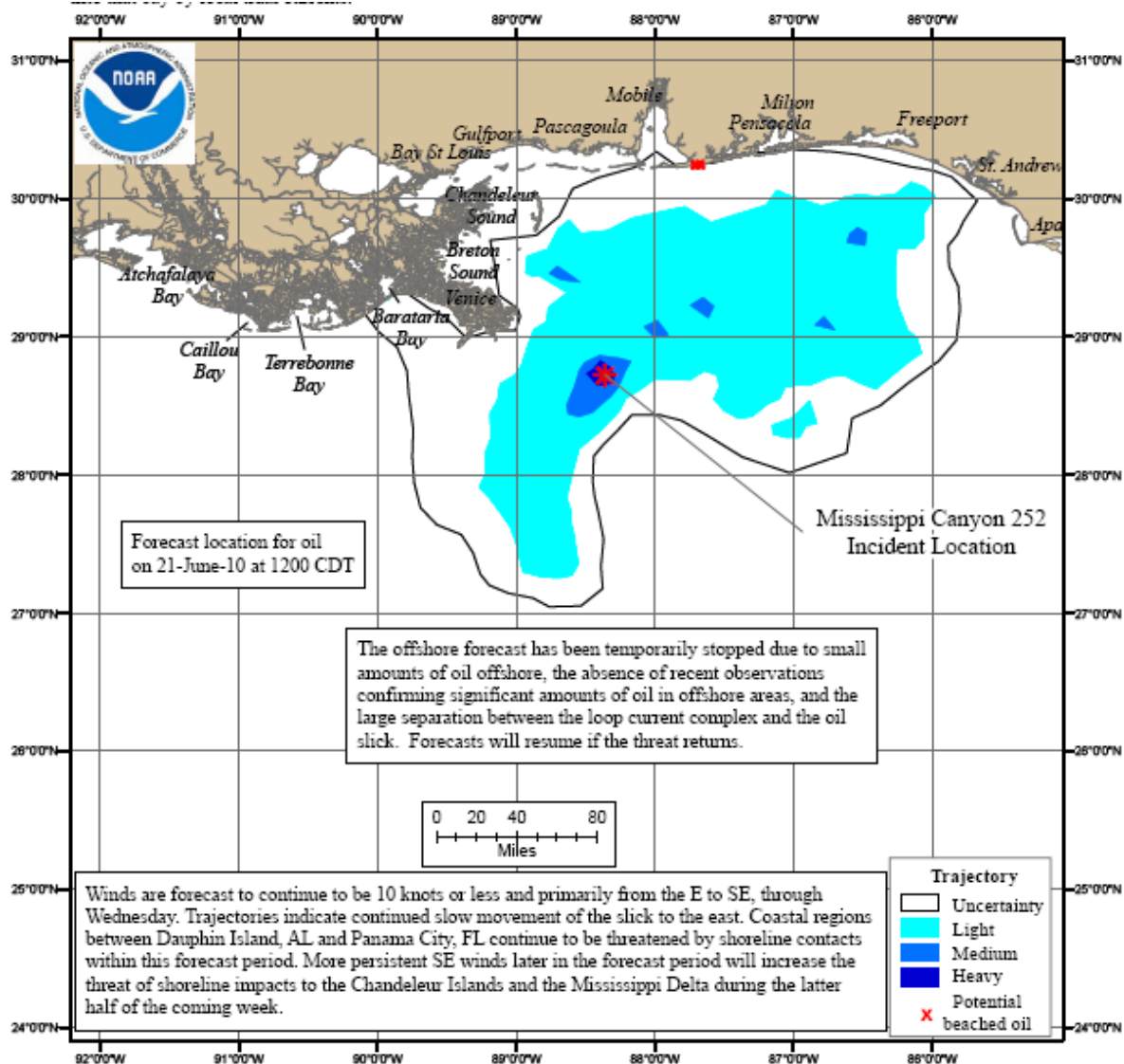


Figure 1 NOAA nearshore oil slick trajectory forecast for 6/8/10.
<http://www.deepwaterhorizonresponse.com/go/doctype/2931/53979>

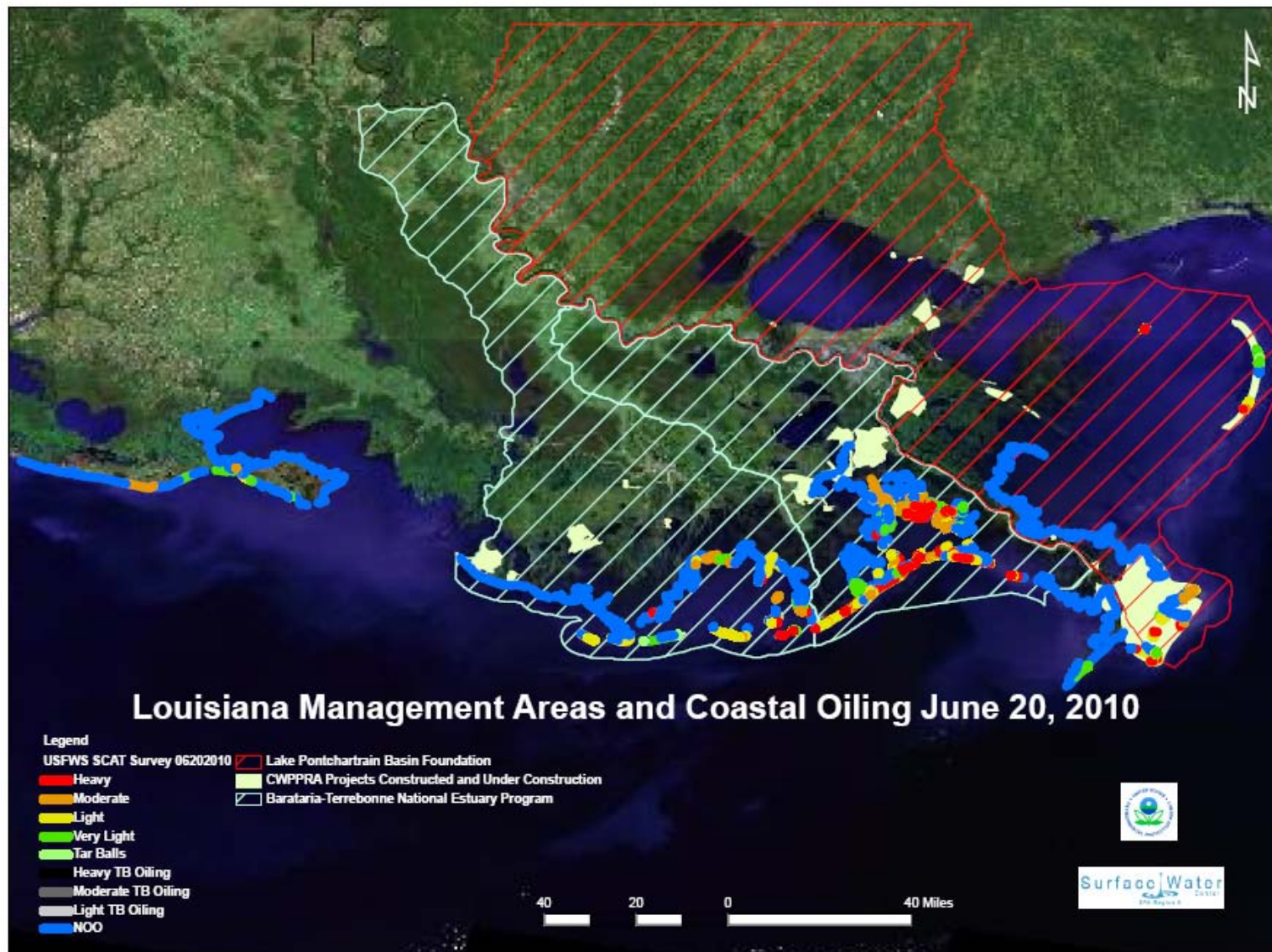


Figure 2 Shoreline impact assessment map including Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program, Lake Ponchartrain Foundation and CWPPRA project boundaries